

BARBER-TOWLER BUILDING (Commercial Building)
(Raleigh Office Supply)
123 East Martin Street
Raleigh
Wake County
North Carolina

HABS NO.NC-10

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Department of the Interior
Southeast Region
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

BARBER-TOWLER BUILDING
(Raleigh Office Supply)

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123 E. Martin Street, Raleigh, North Carolina
Building #71; Moore Square Historic District

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Raleigh, NC

For: City of Raleigh
110 S. McDowell Street
Raleigh, NC

Date: December 15, 1983

Overview:

The Barber-Towler building is listed on the National Register of Historic Building as a contributing structure within the Moore Square Historic District.

The building was constructed at the turn of the twentieth century (circa 1908) in two phases and accommodated a variety of mercantile and storage tenants until 1973 when it began to experience long periods of vacancy, with intermittent and partial tenants.

The Barber-Towler building is scheduled for partial demolition and restoration under plans by the City of Raleigh to revitalize this blighted area. A key element of this revitalization is removal of portions of Building #71 to accommodate a Downtown Bus Transit mall.

Building Chronology: (1908-1984)

The following is a partial chronology of building occupancy and use based on interviews with Joseph W. Barber III, grandson of the original owner and Mr. James D. Ray, owner of Raleigh Office Supply, Inc.:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>
pre-1908	Eastern portion of building constructed by Mr. J.W. Barber and Mr. Towler with two masonry party walls, three stories, 26' x 100' base.
1908	Two bay addition to the west, (47' x 100' x 3 stories) with new facade added to integrate front of earlier building.
1908-1963	Initial occupancy to serve "horse and buggy trade", with advent

of the automobile, then changed to general merchandise wholesale and retail trade.

- 1935 Occupied by Weathers Furniture Company.
- 1940-1960 Occupied by Cooper Furniture Company.
- 1963 Adjacent wood frame barn/work sheds associated with previous uses removed.
- 1963-1973 Occupied by Raleigh Office Supply, Inc.
- 1973-1977 vacancy
- 1977-1983 Partial occupancy by First Citizens Bank and Trust Company Printing Department.

Architectural Characteristics

The Barber-Towler Building contains approximately 20,000 square feet in Gross Area on three floors with a partial basement.

The East Martin Street facade displays a simple Italianate character, in a style popular for commercial buildings at the turn of the century, detailed with engaged pilasters, brick arches above windows at the rear, and corbelled cornices on front and rear facades.

The structure consists of load bearing masonry walls; steel and wood columns; wood joists, and wood frames and trusses in the roof. Steel lintels support the upper facade between bearing walls on the E. Martin Street elevation.

The interior contains heart pine floors, and pressed metal ceilings, with plastered walls on the ground floor and exposed brick walls on upper floors.

Proposed Future Use:

The Barber-Towler Building, previously scheduled for total demolition, is now recommended for partial demolition only, with rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of 7,500 square feet, on three floors. City Plans for development of the Moore Square West Transit Block call for acquisition, partial demolition and stabilization of remaining portions of this building for sale to and renovation by a private developer.

Resources:

1 Joseph W. Barber III
Home Address: 1710 Brooks Avenue
Raleigh, NC

Office Phone: (919) 733-2940
Home Phone: (919) 787-1988

2 James D. Ray, Owner
Raleigh Office Supply
712 Tucker Street
Raleigh, NC 27602

Office Phone: (919) 834-1601

3 MSHD Nomination - September 1981

4 Others - visual inspection

Disc: D#1

Recall: Prop71-4